

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07
TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 /119 W
-----114646 302038Z /23

R 301033Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8294
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VALLETTA 01991

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, MT, IT
SUBJECT: ANDREOTTI RESPONSE TO MINTOFF

REF: (A) VALLETTA 1928, (B) VALLETTA 1964

1. SUMMARY: ANDREOTTI RESPONSE TO MINTOFF LETTER IGNORES
MINTOFF'S JULY 15 DEADLINE AND REMINDS HIM THAT THE ONUS
IS ON HIM, NOT ITALY, TO CONVINCE OTHERS OF MALTA'S NEEDS.
SCHMIDT IS APPARENTLY ABOUT TO REPLY TO MINTOFF'S APRIL 2
LETTER WITH A FAIRLY GENERAL RESPONSE. MEANWHILE
ITALIANS AND GERMANS ARE TRYING TO SORT OUT WHO PICKS UP
THE BALL IN DEVELOPING A EUROPEAN POSITION ON QUESTION OF
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AID TO MALTA. END SUMMARY.

2. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR DA-RIN READ TO NATO AMBASSADORS
HERE ON JUNE 29 THE TEXT OF ANDREOTTI'S RESPONSE OF
JUNE 28 TO RECENT MINTOFF LETTER (REF A). TEXT, BASED ON
ROUGH NOTES, IS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

3. BEGIN TEXT: I HAVE BEEN AWARE FOR A LONG TIME THAT THE POST-1979 ISSUES FOR MALTA ARE OF TWO KINDS AND THAT THOSE RELATING TO THE ISSUE OF NEUTRALITY ARE INSEPARABLE FROM THOSE RELATING TO THE IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY OF THE CLOSURE OF THE UK BASE.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE CONTRIBUTION ITALY CAN PROVIDE IS NOT SUFFICIENT IN ITSELF - A FACT SEEMINGLY CLEARLY RECOGNIZED BY THE GOM WHICH HAD ADDRESSED ITS REQUESTS TO A WIDE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES. THIS WAS ALSO APPARENT IN THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT PROVIDED, FOLLOWING YOUR APPEAL IN 1976 TO THE EC, THE NINE, AND WIDER CIRCLES.

5. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THE REALITY OF FACTS - BOTH IN TERMS OF THE GOOD WILL OF ITALY AND WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES WILL DECIDE TO DO IN LIGHT OF THEIR OWN SOVEREIGN DECISIONS. IN 1976, YOU APPEALED TO ME REGARDING THE PATH YOU PROPOSED TO FOLLOW. I RESPONDED PROMPTLY IN SUPPORT. ON DECEMBER 10, 1976, FORLANI SENT YOU A LETTER SAYING THAT THE GOI, DEFERRING TO THE SOVEREIGN DECISION OF THE GOM, WAS FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO A DECLARATION OF NEUTRALITY OR OTHER FORMULAE DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY MALTA. AT THE SAME TIME WE REPEATED THE DESIRE OF ITALY TO EXAMINE ALL AVAILABLE WAYS TO ASSIST IN MEETING THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF MALTA, POST-1979.

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6. YOU WROTE AGAIN ON MARCH 24, 1977 ASKING FOR CONFIRMATION BY THE GOI OF THIS ATTITUDE. WE IMMEDIATELY DID SO, ON MARCH 30, 1977, THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, THAT THERE WAS NO DIFFICULTY ON THE PART OF THE GOI IN RESPECTING MALTA'S STATUS OF NEUTRALITY WITHIN A POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT.

7. I REAFFIRMED THIS POSITION DIRECTLY WHEN WE MET IN ROME ON 16 JUNE 1977, ADDING THAT WE RECOGNIZED THE ECONOMIC NEEDS OF MALTA POST-1979 AND WOULD WORK WITH OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES TO SEE THAT THESE WERE MET AND UNDERSTOOD.

8. ONE CAN HAVE DIFFERENT EVALUATIONS OR JUDGMENTS CONCERNING YOUR REQUESTS AND THE RESPONSE TO THEM. I HAVE NO WAY OF JUDGING WHETHER THE ONUS OR RESPONSIBILITY RESTS MORE ON US THAN ON YOU IN CONVINCING OTHERS. I HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN RECOGNIZING, HOWEVER, THAT YOU MIGHT BE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE IN CONVINCING OTHERS OF YOUR NEEDS. INDEED I WOULD WELCOME KNOWING WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IN CONVINCING OTHERS - IN GETTING AID FROM OTHERS - IN TERMS OF MALTA'S NEEDS.

9. I AM CERTAIN THAT THE COMMON INTERESTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES IN PEACE AND IN ECONOMIC PROGRESS WILL ALSO GUIDE MALTA AND ITS GOVERNMENT IN ITS CHOICE OF THE ROAD IT WILL FOLLOW. TOWARD THESE OBJECTIVES ITALY WILL CONTINUE TO WORK, WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ITS POSSIBILITIES AND IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS OWN REGARD FOR PEACE IN THIS AREA. END TEXT

10. DA-RIN THINKS ANDREOTTI LETTER WILL BE BADLY RECEIVED.

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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8295
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 VALLETTA 01991

HE OBSERVED THAT HE HAD RECOMMENDED TO ROME A DIFFERENT APPROACH, EMPHASIZING NEED TO COME UP WITH AS SPECIFIC AND TANGIBLE A POSITION ON FUTURE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AS POSSIBLE. HE BELIEVES THAT FAILURE TO DO SO, IN THE CONTEXT OF A DOMESTIC SCENE IN MALTA INVOLVING MINTOFF IRASCIBLY TAKING ON HIS OPPOSITION IN A WIDE VARIETY OF FIELDS, COULD TRIGGER IRRATIONAL ACTS BY MINTOFF THAT EVEN HE MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTY CONTROLLING.

11. DA-RIN'S COUNSEL TO HIS OWN MFA WENT ON TO NOTE THAT AFTER USG NEGATIVE DECISION ON MARSAXLOKK LOAN REQUEST,

WHICH "HAD DEFINITELY EUROPEANIZED THE PROBLEM," IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT ITALIAN POSITION BE CAREFULLY COORDINATED WITH BONN AND THE DRAFT SCHMIDT RESPONSE TO MINTOFF'S APRIL 2 LETTER. DA-RIN FELT THAT THIS POSITION SHOULD
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INCLUDE FRANK ADVICE TO MALTESE THAT CASH SUBSIDIES WERE OUT BUT THAT OTHER TYPES OF ASSISTANCE WERE POSSIBLE.

12. ROME REJECTED THIS DA-RIN COUNSEL, SAYING THAT WHILE THEY MIGHT AGREE WITH IT, THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO PROCEED ON THIS BASIS IN LIGHT OF WHAT THEY UNDERSTOOD FROM ITALIAN EMBASSY IN BONN ABOUT FRG POSITION. LATTER, AS ITALIANS UNDERSTAND IT, IS THAT GERMANS ARE PREPARED TO BE HELPFUL TO MALTA BUT ONLY IN CONTEXT OF HELP BY OTHERS. THEY HAVE NO INTENTION OF AID AT LEVELS REPLACING THE LOSS FROM THE UK BASE, THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS REPORTEDLY THOROUGHLY NEGATIVE ON AID TO MALTA, AND BONN GENERALLY FEELS THAT THE MALTESE SHOULD BE PUSHED TO HELP THEMSELVES. NONETHELESS THE FRG REMAINS PREPARED TO CIRCULARIZE THE NINE AS TO WHAT MEMBERS ARE PREPARED TO DO IN MALTA. ANY MEETING ON THE SUBJECT HOWEVER THEY BELIEVE SHOULD BE HOSTED BY A MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRY SUCH AS ITALY.

13. DA-RIN'S LATEST INFORMATION ON THIS CONTINUING AFTER YOU ALFONSE ROUTINE IS THAT THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN BONN WAS INSTRUCTED ON JUNE 25 TO ADVISE THE FRG THAT WHILE ITALY WAS PREPARED TO HOST AN AD HOC MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE NINE TO TALK ABOUT MALTA'S ECONOMIC NEEDS, IT WAS NOT PREPARED TO DO SO UNTIL THE GERMANS HAD CANVASSED THE FIELD.

14. COMMENT: ANDREOTTI LETTER, COMBINED WITH WHAT WE GATHER WILL BE AN IMMINENT BUT VERY GENERALLY WORDED LETTER AT BEST FROM SCHMIDT, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DEEPEN MINTOFF'S FRUSTRATION. NONETHELESS NONE OF THE OTHER NATO AMBASSADORS HERE SHARES DA-RIN'S CONCERN THAT WE COULD BE CLOSE ON TO IRRATIONAL REACTIONS FROM MINTOFF SERIOUSLY
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PREJUDICIAL TO WESTERN INTERESTS. AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS SOME CONSENSUS AMONG THEM THAT THE SOONER THE EUROPEANS COME TO SOME UNDERSTANDING AMONG THEMSELVES AND MAKE CLEAR TO MINTOFF THE LIMITS IN WHAT HE CAN DEMAND AND EXPECT FROM THEM, THE BETTER FOR ALL CONCERNED. LAINGEN

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Expiration:
Film Number: D780271-0544
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978061/aaaaaaku.tel
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Office: ACTION EUR
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